

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 JIDDA 04026 060844Z

ACTION H-03

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TO AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SA, US, OREP (STONE RICHARD B.)

SUBJECT: VISIT OF SENATOR STONE AND US MIDDLE EAST POLICY

1. SENATOR STONE'S MIDDLE EAST TRIP, PARTICULARLY HIS STAY IN ISRAEL HAS BEEN RECEIVING MODERATE PRESS COVERAGE HERE. PARAGRAPH TWO IS AN EDITORIAL WHICH APPEARED JUNE 6 IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARAB NEWS.

2. BEGIN TEXT:

CONVINCING CONGRESS (HEADLINE)

U.S. SENATOR RICHARD STONE, CHAIRMAN OF THE SENATE MIDDLE EAST SUBCOMMITTEE, HAS MADE IT QUITE CLEAR TO EVERYONE WHERE HIS SYMPATHIES LIE IN THE ARAB-ISRAELI DISPUTE. DURING HIS VISIT TO ISRAEL THIS WEEK, HE SAID HE WAS "VERY ENCOURAGED ABOUT THE OPEN-MINDEDNESS AND WILLINGNESS" OF THE RIGHT-WING LIKUD LEADERSHIP "TO FIND PEACE IN EVERY REASONABLE WAY CONSISTENT WITH THE SAFETY OF ISRAEL." AFTER A TWO-HOUR HEAD-TO-HEAD SESSION WITH LIKUD LEADER AND FORMER TERRORIST MENAHEM BEGIN, MR. STONE TOLD REPORTERS HE HAD DELIVERED "THE LOVE AND AFFECTION FOR BEGIN FELT SO DEEPLY BY ISRAEL'S FRIENDS IN THE UNITED STATES." ISRAEL RADIO SAID THE SENATOR HAD PROMISED MR. BEGIN HE WOULD HELP DRUM UP SUPPORT FOR THE LIKUD AMONG HIS FELLOW SENATORS AND CONGRESSMEN. UNLESS BEGIN IS TELLING SENATOR STONE SOMETHING HE HASN'T TOLD THE PUBLIC, IT LOOKS VERY MUCH LIKE THE SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN HAS

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ADOPTED AN "ISRAEL RIGHT OR WRONG" APPROACH TO A MIDDLE EAST SETTLEMENT.

THE STONE VISIT IS A GOOD INDICATOR THAT THE BATTLE LINES ARE ALREADY BEING DRAWN FOR A KNOCK-DOWN DRAG-OUT CONFRONTATION BETWEEN THE WHITE HOUSE AND CONGRESS OVER THE WAY TO ACHIEVE PEACE IN THE MIDEAST. MR. STONE--NO DOUBT AIDED BY SUCH VETERAN ISRAELI BACKERS AS SENATORS RIBICOFF, JAVITS,

HUMPHREY AND JACKSON--CAN BE EXPECTED TO RALLY TO BEGIN'S DEFENSE IF PRESIDENT CARTER ATTEMPTS TO SQUEEZE A COOPERATIVE ATTITUDE OUT OF THE NEW ISRAELI LEADERSHIP. MR. CARTER SEEMS TO HAVE THREE OPTIONS: (1) HE CAN IGNORE CONGRESS AND BEGIN APPLYING PRESSURE ON ISRAEL TO REACH A SETTLEMENT, AND THUS RUN THE SERIOUS RISK OF ALIENATING THE HOUSE AND SENATE, JEOPARDIZING HIS OTHER FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC PROGRAMS, AND ENDANGERING HIS CHANCES FOR RE-ELECTION IN 1980; (2) HE CAN SUBMIT TO ISRAELI PRESSURE AS EXERTED THROUGH THE CONGRESS, AND GIVE UP HIS EFFORTS TO SEEK A MIDDLE EAST PEACE, AT THE RISK OF RENEWED WAR, AN OIL EMBARGO AND CATASTROPHIC ECONOMIC DISRUPTION OF THE WESTERN WORLD; OR (3) HE CAN CLOSET HIMSELF WITH KEY CONGRESSIONAL LEADERS AND EXPLAIN TO THEM IN PATIENT DETAIL THAT UNLESS THEY ALLOW HIM TO APPLY PRESSURE ON ISRAEL, AMERICA'S OWN INTERESTS WILL BE GRAVELY THREATENED. AT THIS POINT, THE THIRD ALTERNATIVE LOOKS LIKE THE ONLY VIABLE ONE. MR. CARTER IS GOING TO HAVE TO EXPLAIN TO CONGRESS--QUIETLY AND WITHOUT PUBLICITY--THAT THE PRESSURING OF ISRAEL WOULD BE NO MORE DANGEROUS THAN PULLING AN ABSCESSSED TOOTH; IT WILL HURT FOR A WHILE, BUT THE PATIENT WILL SURVIVE. IF SENATOR STONE AND HIS FELLOWS TRULY FEEL "LOVE AND AFFECTION" FOR BEGIN AND HIS COUNTRYMEN, THEY HAD BETTER COOPERATE WITH PRESIDENT CARTER. OTHERWISE, EVERYONE WILL END UP LOSERS.

END TEXT.

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## Message Attributes

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